

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1 through 30 have been amended herein. All of the pending claims 1 through 30 are presented below. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application. Please enter these claims as amended.

1. (Currently amended) A screed mold method for making gelatinous elastomer gel cushioning articles, the method comprising the steps of:

attaching side rails around a perimeter of an open face screed mold, the screed mold including a plurality of crisscrossing slots in a rigid body forming a honeycomb shape defining at least one mold core,

providing a separate injection head, the injection head having a plurality of distribution channels therein through which thermoplastic material may flow, and including at least one heating element within it for heating thermoplastic material,

positioning the injection head adjacent the screed mold so that thermoplastic material may flow from the distribution channels into at least one of the ~~screed mold~~ plurality of crisscrossing slots,

utilizing a pumping source to introduce thermoplastic material into the injection head, and using the plurality of distribution channels of the injection head to deliver thermoplastic material into at least one of the plurality of crisscrossing slots in the screed mold,

displacing the screed mold and the injection head relative to each other causing the thermoplastic material to be level, and

recovering molded and cooled thermoplastic material from the screed mold in a desired geometric shape of a cushioning element.

2. (Currently amended) ~~A- The method as recited in claim 1-~~ claim 1, wherein recovering includes periodically terminating pumping of the thermoplastic material into the screed mold, and during such period of termination, removing molded thermoplastic material from the screed mold.

3. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ The method as recited in ~~claim 1~~ claim 1, wherein utilizing a pumping source to introduce the thermoplastic material into the injection head is a continuous process, and molded thermoplastic material is recovered from one part of the screed mold as unmolded thermoplastic material is delivered into at least one of the plurality of crisscrossing slots in another part of the screed mold.

4. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ The method as recited in ~~claim 1~~ claim 1, wherein recovering molded and cooled thermoplastic material from the screed mold comprises cutting it as it exits one part of the screed mold as new thermoplastic material is delivered into another part of the screed mold.

5. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ The method as recited in ~~claim 1~~ claim 1, wherein including a plurality of crisscrossing slots in a rigid body forming a honeycomb shape defining at least one mold core comprises cutting at least some of the plurality of crisscrossing slots not more than 80% of the way through the rigid body.

6. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ The method as recited in ~~claim 1~~ claim 1, wherein including a plurality of crisscrossing slots in a rigid body forming a honeycomb shape defining at least one mold core comprises cutting at least some of the plurality of crisscrossing slots all the way through the rigid body.

7. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ The method as recited in ~~claim 1~~ claim 1, wherein including a plurality of crisscrossing slots in a rigid body forming a honeycomb shape defining at least one mold core comprises forming the plurality of crisscrossing slots by bolting square or rectangular blocks to a base plate.

8. (Currently amended) ~~A- The~~ method as recited in ~~claim 1-~~ claim 1, wherein including a plurality of crisscrossing slots in a rigid body forming a honeycomb shape defining at least one mold core comprises cutting the plurality of crisscrossing slots in a non-metallic rigid body.

9. (Currently amended) ~~A- The~~ method as recited in ~~claim 1-~~ claim 1, wherein including a plurality of crisscrossing slots in a rigid body forming a honeycomb shape defining at least one mold core comprises cutting the rigid body so that at least some of the plurality of crisscrossing slots cross each other in an "X" configuration.

10. (Currently amended) ~~A- The~~ method as recited in ~~claim 1-~~ claim 1, wherein including a plurality of crisscrossing slots in a rigid body forming a honeycomb shape defining at least one mold core comprises cutting the rigid body so that at least some of the plurality of crisscrossing slots cross each other in a "+" configuration.

11. (Currently amended) ~~A- The~~ method as recited in ~~claim 1-~~ claim 1, wherein including a plurality of crisscrossing slots in a rigid body forming a honeycomb shape defining at least one mold core comprises sizing the plurality of crisscrossing slots to permit the thermoplastic material to flow therethrough when heated.

12. (Currently amended) ~~A- The~~ method as recited in ~~claim 1-~~ claim 1, further comprising providing a separate injection head including at least one cooling channel.

13. (Currently amended) ~~A- The~~ method as recited in ~~claim 1-~~ claim 1, further comprising establishing a desired distance between the injection head and the screed mold prior to flow of the thermoplastic material.

14. (Currently amended) ~~A- The method as recited in claim 1~~ claim 1, wherein utilizing a pumping source to introduce thermoplastic material into the injection head comprises introducing an A-B-A triblock copolymer.

15. (Currently amended) ~~A- The method as recited in claim 14~~ claim 14, wherein utilizing a pumping source to introduce thermoplastic material into the injection head comprises introducing a thermoplastic material including a plasticizer.

16. (Currently amended) A screed mold method for making gelatinous elastomer gel cushioning articles, the method comprising the steps of:

providing an open face screed mold having a structural shape in a rigid body in which gel may be formed to take on a desired geometric structure, the structural shape including crisscrossing slots in the rigid body,

positioning an injection head, having a plurality of distribution channels therein through which thermoplastic material may flow, in close proximity to the screed mold,

utilizing a pumping source to deposit thermoplastic material into the injection head, and distributing the thermoplastic material through the plurality of distribution channels of the injection head, out of at least one exit port of the injection head, into at least one of the crisscrossing slots in the screed mold, causing the screed mold and the injection head to move relative to each other as the thermoplastic material is deposited into the crisscrossing slots, and receiving a cushioning element molded by the screed mold.

17. (Currently amended) ~~A- The method as recited in claim 16~~ claim 16, wherein receiving a cushioning element includes periodically terminating pumping of the thermoplastic material into the screed mold, and during such period of termination, removing molded thermoplastic material from the screed mold.

18. (Currently amended) ~~A- The method as recited in claim 16, wherein~~ utilizing a pumping source to deposit thermoplastic material is a continuous process, and molded thermoplastic material is recovered from one part of the screed mold as unmolded thermoplastic material is distributed into another part of the screed mold.

19. (Currently amended) ~~A- The method as recited in claim 16, wherein~~ receiving a cushioning element molded by the screed mold comprises cutting a portion of the cushioning element as it exits one part of the screed mold due to new thermoplastic material being distributed into another part of the screed mold.

20. (Currently amended) ~~A- The method as recited in claim 16, wherein~~ providing an open face screed mold having a structural shape in a rigid body in which gel may be formed to take on a desired geometric structure, the structural shape including crisscrossing slots in the rigid body, comprises cutting at least some of the crisscrossing slots not more than 80% of the way through the rigid body.

21. (Currently amended) ~~A- The method as recited in claim 16, wherein~~ providing an open face screed mold having a structural shape in a rigid body in which gel may be formed to take on a desired geometric structure, the structural shape including crisscrossing slots in the rigid body, comprises cutting at least some of the crisscrossing slots all the way through the rigid body.

22. (Currently amended) ~~A- The method as recited in claim 16, wherein~~ providing an open face screed mold having a structural shape in a rigid body in which gel may be formed to take on a desired geometric structure, the structural shape including crisscrossing slots in the rigid body, comprises forming the crisscrossing slots by bolting square or rectangular blocks to a base plate.

23. (Currently amended) ~~A- The method as recited in-claim 16- claim 16,~~ wherein providing an open face screed mold having a structural shape in a rigid body in which gel may be formed to take on a desired geometric structure, the structural shape including crisscrossing slots in the rigid body, comprises forming a structural shape in a non-metallic rigid body.

24. (Currently amended) ~~A- The method as recited in-claim 16- claim 16,~~ wherein providing an open face screed mold having a structural shape in a rigid body in which gel may be formed to take on a desired geometric structure, the structural shape including crisscrossing slots in the rigid body, comprises patterning the rigid body such that at least some of the crisscrossing slots cross each other in an “X” configuration.

25. (Currently amended) ~~A- The method as recited in-claim 16- claim 16,~~ wherein providing an open face screed mold having a structural shape in a rigid body in which gel may be formed to take on a desired geometric structure, the structural shape including crisscrossing slots in the rigid body, comprises patterning the rigid body such that at least some of the crisscrossing slots cross each other in a “+” configuration.

26. (Currently amended) ~~A- The method as recited in-claim 16- claim 16,~~ wherein providing an open face screed mold having a structural shape in a rigid body in which gel may be formed to take on a desired geometric structure, the structural shape including crisscrossing slots in the rigid body, comprises sizing the crisscrossing slots to permit the thermoplastic material to flow therethrough when heated.

27. (Currently amended) ~~A- The method as recited in-claim 16- claim 16,~~ further comprising positioning an injection head including at least one cooling channel.

28. (Currently amended) ~~A- The method as recited in-claim 16- claim 16,~~ further comprising establishing a desired distance between the injection head and the screed mold prior to flow of the thermoplastic material.

29. (Currently amended) -A- The method as recited in ~~claim 16~~ claim 16, wherein utilizing a pumping source to deposit thermoplastic material into the injection head includes depositing-a the thermoplastic material including an A-B-A triblock copolymer.

30. (Currently amended) -A- The method as recited in ~~claim 16~~ claim 16, wherein utilizing a pumping source to deposit thermoplastic material includes depositing-a the thermoplastic material including a plasticizer.